

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 IGA-02 AID-20 EB-11 OMB-01

TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

RSR-01 /138 W

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R 131842Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2618

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY SANAA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 08125

KUWAIT PASS ABU DHABI AND MUSCAT

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, OM, UK, JO, US

SUBJECT: BRITISH QUERIES ON US-OMAN RELATIONS

REF: KUWAIT 2405, 2419

1. SUMMARY: FCO OFFICIAL HAS QUIZZED US RATHER INTENSIVELY ON USG AID INTENTIONS AND DIRECT CONTACTS WITH OMANIS. WE SUPPOSE HE WAS TRYING TO TELL US THAT BRITISH SHOULD NOT BE CUT OUT. HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT BRITISH ARE ALSO ANXIOUS, HOWEVER, TO GET US AID INPUT, PARTICULARLY FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. END SUMMARY
 2. DURING CONVERSATION JULY 11 FCO ME DEPT. HEAD WRIGHT PROBED US AT SOME LENGTH ON POSSIBLE USG ASSISTANCE TO OMAN. HE FIRST SUGGESTED THAT HE WOULD HAVE THOUGHT US WOULD WISH ASSIST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RATHER THAN MILITARY. WHEN WE INDICATED WE SAW SLIM
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CHANCE THERE LIKELY TO BE MUCH MONEY AVAILABLE IN ANY

FORMAL AID PROGRAM FOR OMAN, HE INQUIRED AS TO WHETHER WE HAD HAD OMANI REQUESTS FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE.

3. WE SAID GENERAL INTEREST IN BOTH OMAN AND YEMEN FOR USG MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND POLITICAL SUPPORT IS EVIDENT. HOWEVER, THERE HAD BEEN NOTHING MORE SPECIFIC. OMANIS SEEM TO BE WAITING FOR USG TO PROPOSE SOMETHING. USG THINKING ABOUT PROBLEM BUT AS YET HAS NOTHING SPECIFIC IN MIND. HE THEN ASKED IF USG GRANT MILITARY AID LIKELY. WE REMINDED HIM THAT ISA DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY NOYES ON LAST VISIT TO LONDON HAD MADE IT CLEAR OMAN UNLIKELY TO GET MAP ASSISTANCE. HOWEVER, OMAN HAS BECOME ELIGIBLE FOR FMS LOANS AND SOME OF THOSE LIKELY IN FUTURE.

4. WRIGHT PROFESSED FEARS IN SEVERAL DIRECTIONS. HE WARNED AGAINST PROLIFERATION OF EQUIPMENT WHICH WOULD ACCENTUATE ALREADY BAD PROBLEM OF STANDARDIZATION. HE WAS AFRAID THIS MIGHT COMPLICATE TRAINING. HE AGREED (ON OUR PRODDING) THAT MAIN FCO CONCERN IS TO AVOID RUFFLING FEELINGS OF BRITISH ON THE SPOT IN OMAN. HE THOUGHT FEELINGS WERE STILL GOOD, DESPITE SOME DIFFICULTIES IN COORDINATING IRANIAN, JORDANIAN AND SIMILAR INPUTS.

5. WE ASKED IF HE THOUGHT EVENTUAL APPEARANCE OF ONE OR TWO AMERICAN MILITARY OFFICERS ON SCENE WOULD CAUSE ANY DIFFICULTIES. WE MADE IT CLEAR THERE IS NO PROPOSAL FOR SUCH ACTION AND USG REMAINS VERY LEARY OF ENGAGEMENT IN OMAN SITUATION. HOWEVER, IN VIEW PROBABLE ABSENCE OF AID FUNDS AND EXISTENCE OF FMS PROGRAM FOR MILITARY SALES, INVESTIGATION OF OMANI NEEDS ON THE SPOT MAY OCCUR TO WASHINGTON AS LOGICAL STEP AT SOME TIME IN FUTURE.

6. WRIGHT REPLIED THAT US PRESENCE SHOULD NOT CAUSE PROBLEMS IN ITSELF. ONE SHOULD BE CAREFUL TO AVOID

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PROBLEMS OF COORDINATION.

7. WHEN WE SUGGESTED THAT ONE POSSIBLE AREA FOR USG TO INVESTIGATE MIGHT BE TRAINING OF SOME MILITARY, WRIGHT DID NOT DEMUR. HOWEVER, HE SAID TRAINABLE OMANIS ARE OF COURSE IN SHORT SUPPLY. HE WONDERED IF WE MIGHT NOT EXPLORE MORE FULLY WHAT HE CHARACTERIZED AS HIS PERSONAL IDEA OF A TRIANGULAR ARRANGEMENT, WITH OMANIS BEING TRAINED IN JORDAN AT US EXPENSE.

8. WHEN WRIGHT AGAIN ASKED HOW MUCH USG HAS TALKED TO OMANI OFFICIALS DIRECTLY ABOUT AID, WE SAID VERY LITTLE. OUR IMPRESSION IS MOST CONVERSATION HAS BEEN WITH BRITISH OFFICERS SERVING SULTAN. WRIGHT EVENTUALLY SUGGESTED NEW DEFENSE UNDERSECRETARY SAYID FAHARA AS MOST APPROPRIATE INTERLOCUTOR. HE READILY ADMITTED THAT FAHARA NEW ON HIS JOB AND IN CONSTANT TOUCH WITH BRITISH ADVISERS.

9. COMMENT: WE WOULD SPECULATE THAT BRITISH HAVE

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PICKED UP REPORTS OF DIRECT CONTACT BETWEEN OMAN AND USG AND ARE ANXIOUS TO TELL US THEY DO NOT WISH TO BE CUT OUT. (WE SUPPOSE ASSISTANT UNDERSECRETARY PARSONS MAY HAVE MORE TO SAY ON THIS SUBJECT IF HE CAN ARRANGE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY SISCO ON GULF PROBLEMS IN WASHINGTON SOMETIME AROUND SEPTEMBER 20, AS IS HIS PRESENT INTENTION.)

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